

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I will wrap up with a sentence or two and yield to my colleagues. Thank you for coming to the floor to continue the conversation.

I think it is so important that we proceed to put our government back on track and quit careening from crisis to crisis, doing damage to communities and families across our Nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

#### EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the period for morning business for debate only be extended until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and the majority leader be recognized following morning business; further, that the Republican side have the time from 2 p.m. to 2:45 p.m., and the majority have the time from 2:45 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, today is day 9 of the government shutdown. House Republicans piously blame everyone except themselves, but there is no mystery about what is happening.

It is very simple: They continue to refuse to permit a vote on a continuing resolution to keep the government operating for one reason—they disagree with one law, the Affordable Care Act.

That law, debated for months, voted on dozens of times, signed into law by the President, and ruled constitutional by the Supreme Court, will finally make it possible for tens of millions of uninsured Americans to obtain affordable health insurance, including those with pre-existing conditions.

House Republicans and a handful of tea party Senators don't like it, and they have used all kinds of scare tactics to try to derail it. Yet, millions of Americans who know better, who want to protect their families, have already shown that they want to sign up.

Unyielding in their opposition, tea party members of Congress, for whom "compromise" is a dirty word, are on a crusade to hold the Federal government hostage until the Affordable Care Act is repealed. It is a form of extortion that has no place in a democracy.

Then, after a couple of days of angry phone calls from outraged constituents, in an attempt to blunt the criticism, the House Republican leadership abruptly changed course and decided to pick and choose which government agencies and programs to fund.

This latest ploy is revealing for what it says about tea party Republicans. It is as if they suddenly learned for the first time that the Federal Government

is comprised of millions of hard-working Americans, in every State, who perform countless tasks the rest of the country depends on.

Did they not realize that many of the people who sent them to Washington depend on the Federal Government for their monthly pay checks? That every American depends on the Federal Government to inspect the safety of the food they eat, the water they drink, and the air they breathe? That America's students and farmers depend on loans from the Federal Government?

That countless needy families depend on Federally funded Head Start programs? That the Department of Health and Human Services pays for the vaccines that protect American children from polio, measles, and other diseases?

It has been interesting to hear the Speaker of the House. He wants the President to, "sit down and have a conversation."

President Obama has shown time and again he is willing to compromise, sometimes more than some would like. He sat down with the Speaker last week. But no President should negotiate the terms of keeping the Federal government operating. And no Member of Congress should recklessly toy with the United States defaulting on its debt payments for the first time in history, and when the world is finally recovering from a devastating global recession.

The Senior Senator from Maryland, the Chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, has done an excellent job of explaining what is at stake—not only for American families but for the reputation of the United States, the world's oldest democracy. Senators should be aware of the impact of the shutdown on thousands of American companies that depend on financing from the Federal Government to export their products and invest overseas.

During this shutdown, the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation cannot provide new loans or insurance to U.S. companies. This means that every month those companies—U.S. companies—lose \$2 to \$4 billion in revenues, jeopardizing some 30,000 American jobs.

If the shutdown continues, the Department of State, which conducts all kinds of services for Americans and programs overseas, will be severely affected. In fiscal year 2011, when the Federal Government came close to shutting down, the Department estimated that 70 percent of its Washington staff would be furloughed.

Do our Tea Party friends think these Federal workers just sit idly at their desks doing nothing? That they are some kind of luxury we cannot afford? Wait until one of their constituents is falsely arrested and imprisoned overseas, or robbed, or badly injured, and there is no one at the State Department to help them. Almost 800,000 children under the age of 5 die of diarrhea annually, mostly due to unsafe drink-

ing water and poor sanitation. Those deaths are entirely preventable. A prolonged government shutdown would mean curtailing water and sanitation programs for millions of people in the world's poorest countries—programs that have always had strong bipartisan support.

Malaria causes half a billion deaths a year, 90 percent of them children. A continued shutdown would force the U.S. Agency for International Development to stop funding malaria prevention programs, putting tens of thousands of lives at risk.

Speaker BOEHNER is right. Shutting down the Federal Government is "not a damned game." But what the House is doing is playing Russian roulette with the U.S. economy and people's lives. There is no excuse for it, and the Speaker has two choices: stop it, or continue to roll the dice with the U.S. economy and the lives of millions of American families and programs that protect our Nation's security.

At the State Department, the shutdown has already forced the cancellation of International visitors programs that enable future foreign leaders to experience this country first hand. Instead of seeing what a great country this is, they see our political system in disarray. It is embarrassing for our embassies and should be embarrassing to all of us.

Despite the shutdown, the State Department still must ensure the health, safety, and welfare of nearly 10,000 academic exchange participants in the United States and abroad. Either those students and scholars will have to return home, or the organizations and universities that are responsible for implementing the exchanges continue operating without knowing if, or when, their costs will be paid.

We have heard about the impact of the shutdown on the U.S. national security establishment, including the Department of Defense and the intelligence community. But the shutdown may also affect the State Department's anti-terrorism programs that support law enforcement and border controls in countries highly vulnerable to terrorist threats, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Kenya, and Niger.

The shutdown has halted trade talks between the EU and the United States on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Plan. This deal would harmonize U.S. and EU regulatory standards, and eliminate trade barriers. It would bring real benefits to the U.S. economy. Yet the Tea Party shutdown has prevented U.S. trade officials from traveling to Brussels to negotiate with their EU counterparts. Instead, EU diplomats remain at the ready to talk to nobody.

Because of the shutdown, President Obama had to cancel his trip to Asia this week. We hear quite a bit about the Administration's "pivot to Asia," but it is hard to pivot in another direction if you can't even get one foot out of your own country.

Who made it to the Summit instead? China's President Xi filled President